

# *North Carolina Literary Hall of Fame*

*established 1996*

as a program of the North Carolina Writers' Network

1997 Induction Ceremony  
May 17, 1997



Weymouth Center for the Arts & Humanities  
Southern Pines, North Carolina



*North Carolina  
Literary Hall of Fame*





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*North Carolina  
Literary Hall of Fame*

*1997 Inductees*

HARRIET ANN JACOBS

JOSEPH MITCHELL

SAMUEL TALMADGE RAGAN

JOHN EHLE

FRANCES GRAY PATTON

LOUIS D. RUBIN, JR.

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The North Carolina Writers' Network  
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

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# *North Carolina Literary Hall of Fame*

## Annual Induction Ceremony

May 17, 1997

2:30 p.m.

### *Schedule for the Day*

#### WELCOME

Doris Betts

*Greeting from the Town of Southern Pines, Betty Rounds*

#### INDUCTION

Inductee	Presenting	Accepting
SAM RAGAN	Shelby Stephenson	Talmadge Ragan
JOSEPH MITCHELL	Roy Wilder	Nora Mitchell Sanborn
HARRIET JACOBS	Jaki Shelton Green	Jeffrey Crow

Inductee	Presenting
FRANCES GRAY PATTON	Doris Betts
LOUIS D. RUBIN, JR.	Clyde Edgerton
JOHN EHLE	Terry Sanford

#### PRESENTATION OF STUDENT POETRY AWARD

Lenard D. Moore

#### READING BY STUDENT POETRY WINNER

Elliott Taylor

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS

Margaret Boothe Baddour

#### RECEPTION TO FOLLOW



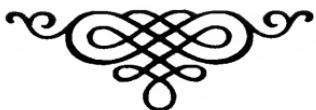
## THE LITERARY HALL OF FAME AWARD

The award that will be presented to the 1997 Literary Hall of Fame inductees is a work of North Carolina art created by Sally Bowen Prange of Chapel Hill. Ms. Prange's porcelain vessels are included in collections all over the world in prestigious locations such as the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, the Smithsonian Institution and the Museo Internazionale della Ceramiche in Faenza, Italy.

Ms. Prange's work is a reflection of her lifelong interest in Chinese culture and art; with her ceramics, she seeks to represent her "romance with water and light" through her interplay of colors and textures suggestive of the underwater world. Her "Celebration" series is distinctive for the altered rims which give each work a sense of continuation with the space around it.

One of Sally Prange's edge-scape bowls was selected by Mrs. James B. Hunt, Jr., as a gift for Princess Anne of Great Britain, during her 1984 visit to North Carolina. Ms. Prange has been featured in numerous books and publications, and she is listed in *Who's Who in American Art* and *Who's Who of American Women*.

The base for the award was hand crafted by G. Blake Alexander of Durham.



## FOREWORD

# WEYMOUTH, WRITERS AND WORDS

It is a sturdy house, 93 years old now and still rising among glossy magnolias and tall pines which lean into the Carolina wind. Its elegance is understated, with none of the ostentation one might expect of a twenty-room house. Weymouth served the Boyd family well for seventy years; since 1979 its service has expanded beyond family to community, its mission marked by the good taste which distinguishes its architectural design.

In 1904, James Boyd, a steel and railroad magnate, purchased 1200 acres in Southern Pines and built a home. He christened this new estate "Weymouth," after a town he had visited in England. Set amidst a magnificent stand of virgin long-leaf pines, it served as a country manor where his grandson and namesake, James, often came as a boy to repair frail health and explore the imposing pine forest and surrounding countryside.

Later young James went to Princeton and earned a master's degree at Cambridge. After serving as an ambulance driver during World War I, an experience which left his health even more fragile, he returned to Weymouth for recovery. In 1919, he and his new wife, the former Katharine Lamont, spent their honeymoon in the house, which by now James co-owned with his brother, Jackson. The following year, he and Katharine moved to Weymouth and began redesigning it. They moved part of the original house across Connecticut Avenue to become part of Jackson's new home, now known as the Campbell House. To the remaining structure, they added a second story and two wings, enlarging the Georgian-style house to 9,000 square feet.

James Boyd, now 32 years old, left the management of the family business to his brother while he pursued the dream which had begun when he was editor of his high school newspaper: to become a writer. Boyd's biographer, David Whisnant, observes that Boyd chose to live in Southern Pines because this site "seemed to offer the best conditions for beginning [a literary career]—a reasonable physical comfort, freedom from distractions, and a mild climate...and an opportunity to affirm the tangible values of American life." One of the earliest visitors to the newly-enlarged home was British novelist and playwright John Galsworthy, who, after reading Boyd's stories, encouraged him to try a novel, then, on a trip to New York, urged publishers to "keep an eye on James Boyd." In 1925, Scribner's published Boyd's first novel, *Drums*. It won immediate attention, not only for its story but for its realism—the result of Boyd's extensive and meticulous research.

Boyd went on to write more novels, a number of short stories and a collection of poetry. In 1941, he expanded his career by purchasing and editing the Southern Pines *Pilot*. Meanwhile, his home became a welcome retreat for many of the best writers of the day: Thomas Wolfe, F. Scott Fitzgerald, William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway, John P. Marquand, and Paul Green, as well as his editor, the legendary Maxwell Perkins, and his illustrator, N.C. Wyeth. His daughter, Nancy Sokoloff, recalls that "During my father's lifetime there were no 'writers' colonies.' Our living room and that of Paul and Elizabeth Green served as settings for serious work and conversations about Southern writing and its future."

The serious conversations went beyond literature. During World War II, Boyd organized and served as the National Chairman of the Free Company of Players, a group of writers who were concerned that constitutional rights might be compromised during the frenzy of wartime. Among the writers joining him in writing plays for broadcast over national radio were Orson Welles, Paul Green, Archibald MacLeish, and Stephen Vincent Benet.

In 1944, after James Boyd's untimely death, Katharine continued living at Weymouth and publishing the *Pilot*. She and her children donated 400 pine-filled acres to the State for development into the Weymouth Woods Nature Preserve. When she died in 1974, she left the house, remaining land and forest to Sandhills Community College, which in 1977 put the estate on the market. Fearful that this treasure would be demolished by developers, two friends of the Boyds undertook the task of saving it. Elizabeth Stevenson (Buffie) Ives organized Friends of Weymouth; Sam Ragan, then editor of the *Pilot*, rallied support from the State of North Carolina, the Nature Conservancy, the Sierra Club, the North Carolina Writers' Conference, and the North Carolina Poetry Society. The first person Ragan approached, playwright Paul Green, made the first donation: \$1,000. Later, Moore County resident Bob Drummond provided a major boost with an initial contribution of \$20,000 and a later donation of an equal amount.

Since 1979, the house, surrounded by twenty-two acres, has flourished as a full-fledged cultural center. College groups and various arts groups hold meetings and retreats here. The great room and back lawn host concerts by chamber music groups and such notables as Doc Watson and lectures by speakers as varied as social critic Tom Wolfe and sociologist John Shelton Reed. There have also been frequent readings by North Carolina's writers, such as Clyde Edgerton, Kaye Gibbons and Shelby Stephenson, as well as an annual poetry festival the last Saturday in June.

In addition to formal programs, Weymouth has hosted one of former North Carolina Poet Laureate Sam Ragan's favorite projects: residencies offering writers, artists and composers stays of up to two weeks to pursue their art in James Boyd's hospitable home. Poet and novelist Guy Owen was the first writer-in-residence; in 1981, just a few months before his death, he also made his last public reading at Weymouth. By 1997 over 500 writers and artists have held residencies here. Many testify that their art has flourished on this site; some even credit the hovering spirit of James Boyd and perhaps those of his many literary guests with providing additional creative impetus.

It is fitting that Weymouth, where James Boyd and hundreds of other writers have found congenial conditions for their work, is the site of the North Carolina Literary Hall of Fame. It is also fitting that the space set aside for this distinction is the upstairs Boyd Room, where James did his own writing, often by dictating to a stenographer as he paced back and forth, taking on the voices of his characters. Perhaps the spirits of those who are honored here will join the chorus of literary masters whose influence echoes through the halls and across the grounds of Weymouth.

Sally Buckner  
Raleigh, North Carolina

## *INTRODUCTION*

*And down the centuries that wait ahead there'll be some whisper of our name, some mention and devotion to the dream that brought us here.*

— The Lost Colony by Paul Green

From its earliest days, North Carolina has been blessed with the “mention and devotion” of a great host of writers living and working in the state. A rich literary heritage is a legacy cherished by all North Carolinians.

The North Carolina Literary Hall of Fame is established as a perpetual opportunity to remember, honor and celebrate that heritage. By marking the contribution of its literary giants of every generation, it will support and encourage the further flourishing of excellent literature in the state.

The North Carolina Literary Hall of Fame was the dream of a generation of the state's most dedicated cultural leaders, mobilized by Sam Ragan, former poet laureate of North Carolina. It was authorized by a Joint Resolution of the General Assembly on July 23, 1993, then formally established by a grant from the N.C. Department of Cultural Resources to the North Carolina Writers' Network, a literary organization serving writers and readers across the state since 1985.

The Hall of Fame is physically located in a notable shrine of North Carolina writing. The Weymouth Center for the Arts & Humanities in Southern Pines is the former home and workplace of novelist James Boyd and his wife Katharine, a distinguished journalist and patron of the arts. The large room where plaques, pictures, books and other memorabilia of the state's honored writers are displayed was Boyd's workroom.

Members of the Hall of Fame are selected annually by a committee of writers. The goal is to choose widely and inclusively from the great parade of novelists, poets, short story writers, playwrights, journalists and storytellers of all sorts who have called themselves North Carolinians. While the first year honored only those from the past, the Hall of Fame now joins other notable cultural award programs in honoring living writers.

Seventy-five years ago, an editor visiting North Carolina marveled at the literary liveliness of the place where, she said, writers flourished in “an atmosphere of plain living and high thinking that I never experienced before.”

In the spirit of those who over the centuries have graced North Carolina with a literature of such quality, beauty and power, the North Carolina Literary Hall of Fame proudly honors writers who have achieved enduring stature in their mention and devotion to their art and to the state.

Roy Parker, Jr.  
Fayetteville, North Carolina

Writer, abolitionist and reformer Harriet Jacobs was born a slave in Edenton, North Carolina. Her life story, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, Written by Herself*, published under the pseudonym Linda Brent, helped build Northern sentiment for emancipation during the Civil War. Until she was six, Harriet lived with her mother as part of a close-knit family. When her mother died, Harriet was taken into the home of her mistress, Margaret Horniblow, who taught her to read and write. Miss Horniblow died in 1825, willing Harriet to her young niece, Mary Matilda Norcom.

Harriet eventually found herself the object of Dr. Norcom's unwanted sexual attentions and Mrs. Norcom's jealousy. In 1829, she began a liaison with Samuel Treadwell Sawyer. The couple had a son, Joseph, and a daughter, Louisa Matilda. Norcom's continued advances finally caused Harriet to go into hiding for nearly seven years under the porch roof of her grandmother's house. In 1842, Harriet Jacobs escaped to New York where she was eventually reunited with her children. She became active in a circle of anti-slavery feminists who encouraged her to write her life story. She finally obtained her freedom in 1852 and began work on *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* the next year. The book was published "for the author" by a Boston printer in 1861, with a preface written by abolitionist writer Lydia Maria Child. A British edition was published in 1862. Through the war years and after, Harriet Jacobs and her daughter did various kinds of relief work in Washington, D.C., Savannah and Edenton, and in 1896 she helped to organize the National Association of Colored Women. For nearly a century, the authorship of her book was questioned, but a new edition published in 1987 named Harriet Ann Jacobs as the true author of *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*.



HARRIET ANN JACOBS  
(1813 - 1897)

*Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*

published "for the author," Boston, 1861

edited with introduction, Harvard University Press, 1987

Every where the years bring to all enough of sin and sorrow; but in slavery the very dawn of life is darkened by these shadows. Even the little child, who is accustomed to wait on her mistress and her children, will learn, before she is twelve years old, why it is that her mistress hates such and such a one among the slaves. Perhaps the child's own mother is among those hated ones. She listens to violent outbreaks of jealous passion, and cannot help understanding what is the cause. She will become prematurely knowing in evil things. Soon she will begin to tremble when she hears her master's footfall. She will be compelled to realize that she is no longer a child. If God has bestowed beauty upon her, it will prove her greatest curse. That which commands admiration in the white woman only hastens the degradation of the female slave. I know that some are too much brutalized by slavery to feel the humiliation of their position; but many slaves feel it most acutely, and shrink from the memory of it. I cannot tell how much I suffered in the presence of these wrongs, nor how I am still pained by the retrospect. My master met me at every turn, reminding me that I belonged to him, and swearing by heaven and earth that he would compel me to submit to him. If I went out for a breath of fresh air, after a day of unwearied toil, his footsteps dogged me. If I knelt by my mother's grave, his dark shadow fell on me even there. The light heart which nature had given me became heavy with sad forebodings. The other slaves in my master's house noticed the change. Ma[n]y of them pitied me; but none dared to ask the cause. They had no need to inquire. They knew too well the guilty practices under that roof; and they were aware that to speak of them was an offense that never went unpunished.

In many ways the quintessential New Yorker, nonfiction writer Joseph Mitchell always remained close to his North Carolina roots and credited his Robeson County upbringing as the nurturing ground of his passion for storytelling. He was born on a tobacco and cotton farm near Fairmont and maintained a piece of land there until his last years. Mitchell attended the University of North Carolina, but left for a reporting job before attaining his degree. In 1929, a feature story he wrote about a tobacco auction caught the attention of a New York editor, and he moved to the city that would remain his home for the rest of his life. For his first nine years in New York, he worked

as a reporter and feature writer for the *Morning World*, the *Herald Tribune* and the *World-Telegram*, developing his spare, elegant style with beautifully crafted stories about the city's streets and the quirky characters who peopled them. In 1938, he went to *The New Yorker* where he spent the next fifty-eight years writing "Talk of the Town" and profiles of the denizens of the streets, the waterfront and the saloons. He kept an office at the magazine until his death at 87. His keen powers of observation, combined with his humor, sympathy, wit and style, helped set a standard for writers of nonfiction. One collection of his work, *McSorley's Wonderful Saloon*, has been called New York's *Dubliners*. In 1992, most of his previously published *New Yorker* pieces were collected in a single volume titled *Up in the Old Hotel and Other Stories*, introducing Mitchell to a whole new generation of readers. Calvin Trillin called him "the *New Yorker* reporter who set the standard." In 1983, critic Noel Perrin called Joe Mitchell one of "the dozen North Carolinians who belong to American Literature, [along with O. Henry, Thomas Wolfe and Charles Chesnutt]." Perrin went on to say that Joe Mitchell was "in some ways the least known...and in some ways the most remarkable."



JOSEPH MITCHELL  
(1908 – 1996)

I Blame It All on Mamma  
from *McSorley's Wonderful Saloon*  
Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1943

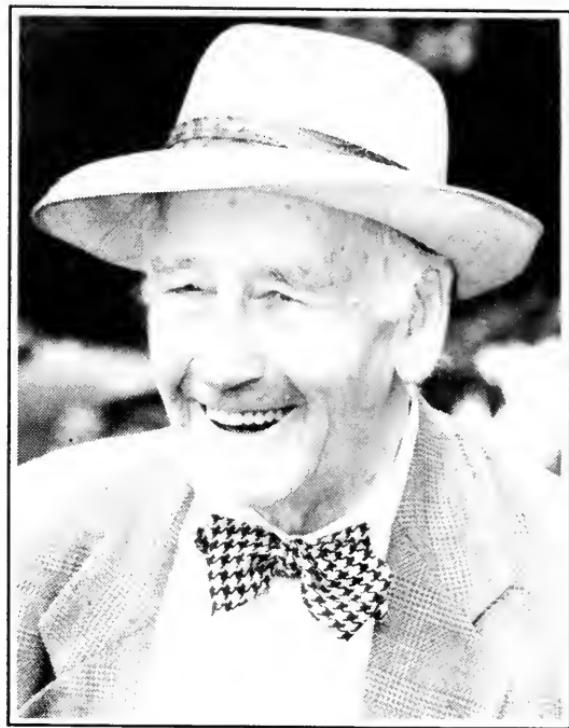
I was in the tenth grade when I became one of her admirers. At that time, in 1924, she was unmarried and had just come up from Charleston to cook in the station restaurant. It was the biggest restaurant in Stonewall; railroad men ate there, and so did hands from the sawmill, the cotton gin, and the chewing-tobacco factory. After school I used to hang around the station. I would sit on a bench beside the track and watch the Negro freight hands load boxcars with bales of cotton. Some afternoons she would come out of the kitchen and sit on the bench beside me. She was a handsome, big-hipped woman with coal-black hair and a nice grin, and the station agent must have liked her, because he let her behave pretty much as she pleased. She cooked in her bare feet and did not bother to put shoes on when she came out for a breath of fresh air. "I had an aunt," she told me, "who got the dropsy from wearing shoes in a hot kitchen."

...Miss Copey had not worked at the restaurant long before she got acquainted with Mr. Thunderbolt Calhoun. He has a watermelon farm on the bank of Shad Roe River in a section of the county called Egypt. He is so sleepy and slow he has been known as Thunderbolt ever since he was a boy; his true name is Rutherford Calhoun. He is shiftless and most of his farm work is done by a Negro hired boy named Mister. (When this boy was born his mother said, "White people claim they won't mister a Negro. Well, by God, son, they'll mister you!") Mr. Thunderbolt's fifteen-acre farm is fertile and it grows the finest Cuban Queen, Black Gipsy, and Irish Gray watermelons I have ever seen. The farm is just a sideline, however; his principal interest in life is a copper still hidden on the bank of a bayou in the river swamp. In this still he produces a vehement kind of whiskey known as tanglefoot. "I depend on watermelons to pay the taxes and feed me and my mule," he says. "The whiskey is pure profit." Experts say that his tanglefoot is as good as good Kentucky bourbon, and he claims that laziness makes it so. "You have to be patient to make good whiskey," he says, yawning, "and I'm an uncommonly patient man."

After Miss Copey began buying her whiskey from him, she went on sprees more often; his whiskey did not give her hangovers or what she called "the dismals." At least once a month, usually on a Saturday afternoon, she would leave her kitchen and walk barefooted down Main Street, singing a hymn at the top of her voice, and she seldom got below Main and Jefferson before she was under arrest.

Sam Ragan was for more than fifty years one of North Carolina's leading men of letters. As the state's first secretary of the Department of Cultural Resources and first chairman of the North Carolina Arts Council, he was instrumental in making the arts in the state accessible to a wide, varied audience. Born in Granville County, Sam Ragan began writing poetry in grade school. By the time he was a student at Atlantic Christian (Barton) College, he knew he wanted to be a newspaperman. Sam Ragan joined the Raleigh *News & Observer* in 1941 and, by the time he left in 1968 to buy *The Pilot* in Southern Pines, he was the *News & Observer's* managing

and executive editor. He stayed at *The Pilot* until his death, continuing to write "Southern Accent," the column he began in 1948. His numerous literary achievements include: the Parker, Morrison and Roanoke-Chowan Awards, induction into the N.C. Journalism Hall of Fame, the North Carolina Award for Fine Arts, the North Caroliniana Society Award, and the DAR Distinguished Service Award. He served as president of: the N.C. Literary and Historical Association, the N.C. Press Association and the Associated Press Managing Editors Association of America. He was chairman of the Freedom of Information Committee and director of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. Sam Ragan published six collections of verse and four works of nonfiction. His poetry has been called "sensitive to the seasons of life, the sureties and contradictions of living, the elements in which we exist...written out of a Tar Heel's sense of place." When Governor Jim Hunt appointed him North Carolina Poet Laureate in 1982, Ragan responded, "I don't know that I'll write poetry on demand, but I would like to encourage North Carolinians to read and write poetry. I'll be happy to do that."



Jan G. Hensley

## SAMUEL TALMADGE RAGAN (1915 – 1996)

# The Marked and Unmarked

from *To the Water's Edge*

Moore Publishing Company, 1971

I cannot say upon which luminous evening  
I shall go out beyond the stars,  
To windless spaces and unmarked time,  
Turning nights to days and days to nights.

This is the place where I live.  
I planted this tree.  
I watched it grow.  
The leaves fall and I scuff them with my feet.  
This is the street on which I walk.  
I have walked it many times.  
Sometimes it seems there are echoes of my  
walking—

In the mornings, in the nights,  
In those long evenings of silence and stars

—the unmarked stars.

John Ehle was raised in Asheville by parents with their roots in the Appalachian Mountains. He credits his mountain heritage with his gift for storytelling. Following service in World War II, Ehle earned his B.A. and M.A. degrees at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he also taught for ten years. As a high school student competing in debate tournaments, he became interested in writing and says that he still writes works that are meant to be read aloud. During his student years at Chapel Hill, he wrote plays for the American Adventure series on NBC Radio. John Ehle is the author of seventeen books, eleven fiction and six nonfiction. While his fiction is always based in the mountains he knows so well, his nonfiction treats such varied subjects as the Civil Rights struggle, the trials of the Cherokee Nation, French wine and cheese, and Irish whiskey. His respect for the dignity of people is a common thread running through his public work as well as through his writing. As a member of Governor Terry Sanford's staff in the 1960s, he was the "idea man" and an integral part of the creation of the North Carolina School of the Arts, the Governor's School of North Carolina, North Carolina's Film Board, the Institute of Outdoor Drama, the Advancement School, and the School of Science and Math. Ehle has received the North Carolina Award for Literature, the Thomas Wolfe Prize and the Lillian Smith Award for Southern Fiction, and he is a five-time winner of the Sir Walter Raleigh Award for Fiction. He holds honorary doctorates from UNC-Chapel Hill, UNC-Asheville, the North Carolina School of the Arts, and Berea College. When asked by Wilma Dykeman in an interview which of his writings was his favorite, he replied, "The next one. That's always the answer, isn't it?"



Thomas Cox

JOHN EHLE  
(1924 - )

*Last One Home*  
Harper & Row, 1984

A cry of welcome escaped him.

"It's the most difficult thing in the world to be the mother to a family, with everybody going away," she continued, hurrying the words.

Whatever apparition had seized him released him then, and he was left with a deep sweat on his face and a calm attitude once more; his mouth would not close, and his eyes were open, glassy as wet marbles. The doctor came, Imogene arrived, all in a commotion, and Amanda retreated to the hall, where she was met by Mr. Wallerbee. It was over. Broken and unfinished. Even her explanation had been pieces of a bit. She stood in the hallway, weeping deeply, tears gushing from her eyes. Wallerbee put his arms around her to keep her from falling.

The women on the porch began wailing steadily, knowing without being told that the end had come. Men in the yard interrupted stories about trades and cars, leaving them unfinished. Hugh, standing near his pup, felt the chill. Out of Wales and England, from old Scotland and Ulster the wail came, out of unrecorded time the women acknowledged without pain or anger an event often occurring; they accepted death without bitterness, with wave on wave of regret, mentioning in high-pitched voices the old-beyond-measure anguish of their breed; bearers of new life, sustainers of the living, bathers of the cold, of the dead. Know the dead; they are our living. Know the dead; they are our children grown old. Know the dead; they are ourselves not yet dying. Know the dead; they are the recurring reminder. Know the dead; they are free of pain. Know that the dead bury their hatreds with them. Know the dead; they are the last remaining measure. Know the dead; they are our brothers, sisters, kin. In their dirt-covered places, they are remembered without malice. Know the dead; they were reapers of grain, gatherers of apples, sellers of hogs, cropsmen of corn and hay, stealers of wild honey. Know the dead, and lift no voice in anger; life and death are twins in league together. Know the dead, whimper not one sound, but let your voice be full and from the throat and chest, let the sound rise in unworded refrain. Know the dead and call not one word to God in anger for taking what was promised. Low, bend low in the moving chairs; old women, bend over your knees. Now rock backward as your voices rise, the volume increasing as the chair rocks backward, as your bodies rise until your faces are known to us, wrinkled, mouths slackened from loose teeth, lips formed in circles. Out of your bodies came the body, into the earth goes the body, into a hole like your mouths. Bury him sooner or later; it matters little. First must be the sound of thank God for death, thank God for death, which brings us all together at last.

Frances Gray Patton, born and raised in Raleigh, North Carolina, has said that she can hardly remember a time when she didn't consider herself a writer. She had her first literary success in high school, winning first place in a national short story contest. She attended Trinity College (now Duke University) and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where she was an active member of the Carolina Playmakers. While she was a student at UNC, she wrote a play, "The Beaded Buckle," and later received a Playmaker Fellowship for her acting. In the years following her marriage, she focused her energies on raising three children, later writing and submitting stories for publication. An early story, "A Piece of Bread," published in *The Kenyon Review*, won second place in a national competition and was included in the 1944 *O. Henry Memorial Award Stories*. Her best-known work, the novel *Good Morning, Miss Dove*, expanded from a short story entitled "The Terrible Miss Dove," appeared as a series of stories in the *Ladies Home Journal*. The collected tales of a North Carolina schoolteacher won the Sir Walter Raleigh Award and the Christopher Award in 1955 and became the basis of a Hollywood film. Mrs. Patton's stories have appeared in numerous anthologies and magazines, primarily in the *New Yorker*. She won the Sir Walter Raleigh Award in 1953 and again in 1956 for her collections, *The Finer Things of Life* and *A Piece of Luck*. Mrs. Patton was awarded the North Carolina Award for Literature in 1970 and in 1990 received the R. Hunt Parker Memorial Award for lifetime contributions to the literary heritage of North Carolina.



Mills Steele

## FRANCES GRAY PATTON (1906 - )

## *Good Morning, Miss Dove*

Dodd, Mead and Company, 1954

Miss Dove watched him go, but her mind watched two small boys who had long since departed from Cedar Grove.

She had come on those lads at the drinking fountain. (They'd had no business at the fountain; it was their library period. But the librarian was lax.) They had been discussing her.

"I bet Miss Dove could lick Joe Louis," one of them had said.

"Who? That old stick?" the other one had jeered. "I could beat her with my little finger!"

He had glanced up to see Miss Dove looking down at him. She had looked at him for a long time. Her gray eyes were expressionless. The tip of her long nose was pink, but no pinker than normal. At last she had spoken.

"Thomas Baker," she had said in the tone of one making a pure observation, "you talk too much, don't you?"

"Yes, ma'am," Thomas had said in a tiny voice. He had gone off without getting any water. For a long time afterwards he sweated when he thought of the incident. He could not know that Miss Dove remembered too. But she did.

Ever since Pearl Harbor Miss Dove had been troubled. She lived quite alone, for her sisters were married by then and her mother was dead, and one evening while she was correcting papers she sensed, with that uncanny extra-perception of the teacher, that something had intruded upon her solitude. She looked quickly about her sitting-room. A curtain rustled in a puff of breeze; her grandmother's whatnot cast a grotesque shadow on the polished floor; a finger of lamplight picked out a gold title on one of her father's old brown travel books. There was nothing else. But the red correction pencil shook in her fingers; for a moment her throat constricted in a spasm of desolate, unaccountable grief and a conviction of her own unworthiness. Miss Dove had never before felt unworthy in all her life.

After that the thing happened frequently, until at last she saw who the intruders were. They were the children she had taught long ago.

War had scattered those children. There was a girl—a vain, silly little piece she had been—who was a nurse on Corregidor. At least, when last heard of she had been on Corregidor. One of the boys was dead in Tunisia. Others were on the Anzio beachhead, or in the jungles of New Guinea, or in the flak-brightened sky over Germany. But they came back to Miss Dove. She saw them as they had been at seven, at ten, at twelve. Only they had a beauty she had not seen in them then. They lifted their faces like starry morning flowers. Their limbs quivered with the unreasoned joy of childhood. And then, as Miss Dove looked at them, they grew still. Their faces paled. They clasped their little hands. They faded and were gone.

Editor, novelist, essayist, teacher and publisher Louis D. Rubin, Jr., has had an immeasurable effect on a generation of North Carolina writers and readers. Born in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1923, Louis Rubin spent two years at the College of Charleston and received his B.A. degree in history from the University of Richmond after serving in the United States Army during World War II. He earned his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from Johns Hopkins University, where he co-edited his first book, *Southern Renascence*, a work which established him as a major figure in Southern literature. In 1955 he published *Thomas Wolfe: The Weather of His Youth*

and has continued to write prolifically, publishing forty books since those first two. Louis Rubin came to the University of North Carolina in 1967 and remained on UNC's English faculty for twenty-two years, retiring from teaching in 1989 as University Distinguished Professor of English, now Emeritus. He left teaching in order to devote his energies full time to Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, which he founded in 1983. Rubin is the recipient of numerous awards and honors, including *Sewanee Review*, Fulbright and Guggenheim Fellowships; the Oliver Max Gardner Award; the Mayflower Award; the Distinguished Virginian Award; and honorary degrees from the University of Richmond, the College of Charleston and Clemson University. He received the North Carolina Award for Literature in 1992 and most recently, the R. Hunt Parker Memorial Award for lifetime contributions to the literary heritage of North Carolina. His interests outside of literature include fishing, classical music and baseball. "He became something of a literary hero to me even before I met him," declares Clyde Edgerton. "After I met him, I respected him even more."



Curt Richter

## LOUIS D. RUBIN, JR. (1923 - )

# The Boll Weevil, the Iron Horse and the End of the Line

from *A Gallery of Southerners*

Louisiana State University Press, 1982

...[I]f [nostalgia] were all there was to the southern literary imagination as it views the past, there would be little point in paying much heed to it. For the truth is that...just as there was at no time an absolute, unchanging, permanent form to the life of the Carolina low country, but instead at all times change and alteration, so my own memories of places, people, institutions, and artifacts of my own childhood and young manhood are composed not of fixity and diurnity but of elements that were very much caught up in change, however they may have once seemed immutable to me.

I had thought of the little Boll Weevil train as fixed and determined in its arrivals and departures at the Seaboard station. But the railroad crew that operated it reported that it had constantly broken down and been behind schedule, and what it meant for the agricultural life of the low country had been mobility, change, the coming of the city to the sea islands and the movement of the black folk to the city. When during the war I had caught sight of the Boll Weevil late one winter night in North Carolina, and had felt so powerfully that it belonged not there on the unfamiliar siding but to summer afternoons at the stucco station in Charleston, I had been facile. It was not the little train, but myself, who was in what seemed to be the wrong place and wrong season. And what made the present time and place seem unsatisfactory was that I was attributing a greater emotional importance, a more self-sufficient identity and a freedom from contingency, to the earlier experience. Whereas the truth was that only *because* of the later experience—because I *saw* the little train in Hamlet that night—was the earlier experience made to seem so important, so intense, to seem, in short, so very *real*. In actuality the authenticity of the experience, and its importance for me, lay neither in the isolated memory of the little train at College Park as such, which was an act of mere nostalgia, nor in my reencounter with the train at Hamlet, which because of its seeming inappropriateness was so pathetic. Rather, the authenticity and importance resided in the relation of the one to the other—in the profound vividness of the experience of time and change, a vividness that I myself, through my participation, was able to bring to it. And it has been just such vividness, but magnified and enriched many times through artistic genius, that has constituted the achievement of the best of the modern southern writers.

# *North Carolina Literary Hall of Fame*

## AWARD PRESENTERS AND ACCEPTERS

### JOHN EHLE

*Presenting:* TERRY SANFORD, former N.C. Governor and U.S. Senator, has had an impressive career as an attorney, professor and public servant. Among his numerous distinctions, Sanford served as president of Duke University for 14 years, received 30 honorary degrees and co-founded the Educational Commission of the States. He served as president of the National Municipal League and served on the boards of countless organizations concerned with education, public service and the arts. He has written four books, the most recent of which is *Outlive Your Enemies*, about growing old in good health. Sanford is currently a professor of public policy at Duke University.

### FRANCES GRAY PATTON

*Presenting:* DORIS BETTS, Alumni Distinguished Professor of English at UNC-Chapel Hill, is also chancellor of the Fellowship of Southern Writers. The author of numerous acclaimed short stories and novels, Betts has recently published her eighth novel, *The Sharp Teeth of Love* (Knopf). Betts was presented with the John Tyler Caldwell Award for the Humanities in 1992 by the North Carolina Humanities Council. Her recent novel, *Souls Raised from the Dead*, received the Southern Book Critics Award in 1995. It and two other of her books, *Heading West* and *The Astronomer and Other Stories*, are currently out in paperback.

### SAM RAGAN

*Presenting:* SHELBY STEPHENSON was born on a farm in Johnston County in 1938, earned his bachelor's degree from UNC-Chapel Hill and received his Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin at Madison. He has been a professor of communicative arts at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke since 1978 and is the author of seven volumes of poetry, including *Middle Creek Poems*, *Plankhouse* (with photographs by Roger Manley) and *Poor People* (forthcoming). Stephenson has been the editor of *Pembroke Magazine* since 1979 and has received numerous literary awards.

*Accepting:* TALMADGE RAGAN is the daughter of Sam Ragan. She grew up in Raleigh, attended Chatham Hall, UNC-Chapel Hill and Finch College. She lived in New York City for many years, working in advertising and commercial production, before returning to Southern Pines to assist her father at *The Pilot*, for which she continues to write a weekly column. An actor and writer, she presently lives in Los Angeles with her husband, film director and writer, Worth Keeter. Her sister, Nancy Smith, joins her today in accepting the Literary Hall of Fame award for their father.

## HARRIET JACOBS

*Presenting:* JAKI SHELTON GREEN is the author of four poetry collections, *Dead on Arrival*, *Mask*, *Dead on Arrival and Other Poems*, and most recently, *Conjure Blues*. Her poems have appeared in *Essence*, *Hyperion*, *Sun*, and *Ms.* magazines, as well as in several anthologies. She is the recipient of a 1991 Durham Arts Council Emerging Artist Grant. A tireless advocate for the community and for the arts, Green has served on many local boards, including the North Carolina Humanities Council, the North Carolina Arts Council Literature Panel and the Paul Green Foundation.

*Accepting:* JEFFREY CROW is the director of the Division of Archives and History of the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources and an associate professor of history at North Carolina State University. He has authored, co-authored and edited a number of works including *The Black Experience in Revolutionary North Carolina*, *A History of African Americans in North Carolina* (with Paul D. Escott and Flora J. Hatley) and *North Carolina: The History of an American State* (with John Bell, Jr.). Crow served as editor in chief of the *North Carolina Historical Review* from 1982 to 1995.

## JOSEPH MITCHELL

*Presenting:* ROY WILDER, a native of Spring Hope, N.C., has spent most of his life in public relations and advertising. He did some "newspapering" around North Carolina, and when he went to New York, Joe Mitchell introduced him to the editor of the *World Telegram*, and he got the job. Wilder also worked for the *New York Post* and *Herald Tribune*, where "I had the best time of my life." He began his Army service as a press officer in Normandy, returned to New York then back to the South where he worked on political campaigns in Washington and North Carolina. He is the author of *You All Spoken Here*, from Viking Penguin and is back, full circle, in Spring Hope.

*Accepting:* NORA MITCHELL SANBORN, the oldest daughter of Joseph Mitchell, spent a magical childhood with her parents and sister, Elizabeth, in Greenwich Village, the family's home for 56 years. Ms. Sanborn went to Vassar College and works as a probation officer for children under 18. Her husband is a tugboat captain (gone 30 days, home 30 days) and was a great friend of Joseph Mitchell. The Sanborns have three children and live in New Jersey. Elizabeth Mitchell Curtis, who is a social worker and writer, also has three children and lives in Atlanta. Both daughters have inherited their father's interest in other people's stories.

## LOUIS D. RUBIN, JR.

*Presenting:* CLYDE EDGERTON is a pilot, a musician, a Ph.D. in English education, and the author of six novels, five set in the Carolina Piedmont and one in the Old West: *Raney*, *Walking across Egypt*, *The Floatplane Notebooks*, *Killer Diller*, *In Memory of Junior*, and *Redeye*. For his insightful, compassionate and humorous writing, Edgerton has been awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Lyndhurst Prize and the Sam Ragan Award. *Publishers Weekly* named *The Floatplane Notebooks* one of the best books of 1988. Edgerton was recently inducted into the Fellowship of Southern Writers.





